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L E T T E R

TO THE

RIGHT HONORABLE

CHARLES JAMES FOX,

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On the late DEBATES upon the DECLARATORY  
BILL in PARLIAMENT, and in LEADENHALL-  
STREET.

By AN INDIA PROPRIETOR,

L O N D O N :

PRINTED FOR JOHN STOCKDALE, OPPOSITE  
BURLINGTON-HOUSE, PICCADILLY.

M.DCC.LXXXVIII.

[Price One Shilling and Six-pence.] *756*

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PRINTED FOR J. JOHNSON, ST. PAULS CHURCH-YARD, OPPOSITE  
ST. MARTIN'S LANE, LONDON, W.C.

[Price One Shilling and Six pence.]



A LETTER, &c.

**S I R,**

**Y**OU have long been represented as the champion of liberty in England.—In the opinion of your friends you were sacrificed a few years ago, because you nobly refused to consent to a diminution of that power, which we the people of England possess in this happy constitution.—Government however had for some time been carried on, notwithstanding your opposition, with a remarkable degree of unanimity; and even Mr. Fox, who cannot be supposed to entertain very favourable sentiments for the minister, spoke of his conduct at the com-

mencement of the present session in terms of great approbation. The prospect has been suddenly clouded, and I am free to confess, that Mr. Pitt's popularity has lately received a blow, from which it will not immediately recover.

I FEEL, I profess, a very strong inclination to state to the public the true grounds of the late warmly-contested disputes in Parliament, and in Leadenhall-street; but before I proceed I must implore your pardon, if unintentionally one libellous expression should escape my pen. I had long conceived, indeed, that such a request to Mr. Fox, of all men living, would have been unnecessary;—but after what has lately happened you will pardon me for making it; and you will, I hope, receive it with indulgence.

It was impossible, on an Indian question, to avoid a very full discussion of your celebrated Bill; but it is with some surprise I have heard it asserted out of doors, that what has recently happened is a full justification of that bill, and that your friends will go down to the next election with it in their hands,

hands, as their best recommendation. From whence could such a delusion arise? If I can trust my own ears, a majority of those gentlemen who divided with you, did so upon terms which, though they do them infinite honour, can afford very little cause of triumph to the avowed friends of Mr. Fox:— They left Mr. Pitt because they conceived that he was attempting to obtain a part of that patronage by sap, the whole of which Mr. Fox would have taken by storm.

PERMIT me very shortly to explain what you would have taken, and what Mr. Pitt has legally obtained.

SINCERITY is amongst the first of virtues that a statesman can possess, perhaps it is the first.—You are the only statesman I ever knew or read of, who are supposed really to possess sincerity. I will therefore give you every credit which you can claim, for having fairly avowed in the month of November, 1783, that you would seize all the patronage of the East India Company, both at home and abroad. I give you credit for flighting the advice of your friend Mr. Sheridan. You  
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were right not to expunge that offensive clause. Money, securities for money, goods, houses, warehouses, down to locks and keys, were meant to be taken, and it was fair in you to state your meaning as roundly as possible. May I not without offence, however, presume, that you placed very great dependance upon a decided and powerful majority in Parliament? You were bold when in your own opinion there was no danger. The East India Company, ever an object of jealousy in this country, and very justly so I freely allow, was peculiarly so at the moment you brought in your Bill. She was described as bankrupt, and not as bankrupt by the calamities of a war, in which the politics of Great-Britain had involved her; but her distresses were supposed to arise from gross mismanagement abroad, and from corrupt connivance at home.—Such was the advantage with which you began the attack. Let me now review very shortly the forces which you brought into the field to support you in that attack.

EARLY in the year 1783, you forced from his Majesty's councils the Marquis of Lansdowne,

downe, and the Lord Chancellor.—True it is, you had not strength to effect this by your own adherents ; you therefore called to your assistance a man, whose misfortunes I lament, and whose private virtues I revere. That noble Lord, a host in himself, had many friends who looked up to him with gratitude for favours received : he had also many more friends of another description, who looked up to him for future favours. The gentlemen of both these descriptions re-echoed with vehemence, the godlike sentiment you uttered,

—“ *Inimicitiae placabiles amicitiae sempiternae.*”

Lord Lansdowne could not withstand such a combination. He saved England by a peace, and, as a reward for so great a service, he was permitted to retire unmolested to his woods. Of your own adherents, Sir, I shall say but little : amongst them are to be found men of extensive property, not eminent for superior talents ; and men of no property, whose companionable qualities endear them to all who know them. These descriptions of persons composed a large majority in the late



late House of Commons, on whom you could depend, as long as his Majesty continued you in office.

WHEN your scheme was opened, the country took the alarm: but those who had had a nearer opportunity of examining the conduct of ministers, trembled for the constitution. It was asserted on the one hand, and not contradicted on the other, that your bill assumed all the patronage and all the commerce of the Company in every part of the world. The only security we had against an abuse of such vast powers, was in the irreproachable characters of your commissioners; a majority of them were left to you as a legacy by the late Marquis of Rockingham. Earl Fitzwilliam was his nephew and his heir; Mr. Montague, Mr. Gregory, and Sir Henry Fletcher, were strenuous members of that party. Let me therefore, Sir, stating what the Marquis did, assume for a moment, that they would have followed his example. One great security against corrupt patronage in India is, that the officer and the civil service rise by seniority; and though abuses may prevail, and doubtless have prevailed,



even where this rule is observed, still it is the best possible security that can be devised against the corrupt exercise of patronage. But so far was the Marquis of Rockingham and his friends above the pain of bestowing a moment's attention upon the just rights of the Company's servants, that in one day, in the year 1782, nine young majors were promoted to the rank of lieutenant-colonels in India only, and nine young lieutenant-colonels to the rank of colonels in India only; thereby effectually precluding the old officers of the Company from every possibility of command and distinction in their own service.

IN the same year, 1782, the Marquis of Rockingham, at the requisition of Mr. Burke, agreed to the appointment of his cousin William Burke to the office of pay-master of the king's forces in India. This was, in fact, the creation of a new and useless office; and it was bestowed upon a man who had stolen out to India against law; who at the time was the avowed agent of an Indian Rajah, and was absolutely incapacitated for fifteen months after he received the nation's money,

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from executing any service in return, supposing there had been any thing for him to do.

SIR Henry Fletcher, for the purposes of patronage, and patronage only, overloaded all the establishments of the Company in India, civil and military, when the war was actually at an end. The consequence is, that since 1783 to this day, neither a writer nor a cadet has been appointed.

Now, Mr. Fox, may I not fairly presume, from these instances, that when the whole civil and military patronage of India was thrown into the hands of that party which had abused, as far as they could abuse, the powers formerly entrusted to them, may I not suppose, I say, that with India at their feet, they would have used it for the purposes of their own ambition and future security? The conclusion is evident.

WITHOUT entering into any invidious examination of the characters of those who composed what is called the Coalition Administration, I may fairly say, that they were  
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in general men of desperate fortunes: I do not mean the Cabinet, though even there I could point out some who with great landed property were universally known to have been involved in pecuniary difficulties; but I mean principally the second and third ranks, the efficient men of that administration. Of these there were many of family, without fortune; and many without either family or fortune. To such men, conceive for a moment what a mine was opened. A thousand guineas was publicly offered for a writer's appointment: and if, according to Mr. Burgoyne's expression on a former occasion, the Company's service was rotten to the core, would you have been at a loss for arguments to justify a general removal? Why, Sir, the incumbrances in Drury-lane and the Hay-market, and the mortgage upon a Buckinghamshire freehold, might have been cleared in a fortnight. In a word, Mr. Fox, your bill vested such powers of patronage in seven men, as cannot be vested in any men without ruin to this constitution; and the men in whom you did vest the power, were as likely, from the circumstances which I



have mentioned, to abuse that power, as any seven men in England.

BEFORE your bill had gone through two branches of the legislature, it was perfectly understood: we heard, it is true, a great deal of nonsense about back stairs, and secret influence; but the fact is now generally acknowledged, that the Marquis of Buckingham demanded an audience of his Majesty, and openly, avowedly, and unequivocally, gave his sentiments of the bill to the Sovereign. It is generally acknowledged, that in so doing the noble Marquis acted constitutionally; and as to any means afterwards used to obtain a majority against your bill, I fancy the activity on the one part could not exceed the industry on the other.

I now come to Mr. PITT's administration.—On its first formation, you predicted its duration not to exceed Twelfth Day; but the delusion, as you termed it, has been of long continuance.

IN the month of August, 1784, Mr. Pitt's bill was passed. This bill left to the East-India

India Company the entire management of its commerce. It left to the Company all appointments to offices, both at home and abroad. The minister refused what the Company had agreed to concede to him, the power of appointing governors, and commanders in chief. The bill vested in a Board, to be nominated by his Majesty, the controul and direction of all powers, civil, military, and financial, in India.

I PROTEST to you, Sir, that I do not conceive the imagination of man could frame a system more perfect, attending at the same time to that just jealousy as to the patronage of India, which has marked this, and I trust will mark every future House of Commons.

LET us, Mr. Fox, examine what effects this bill has produced. It passed in the month of August 1784. In the March preceding, the sword was completely sheathed in India. In that month, a peace was concluded with the last, and the most formidable of our enemies, Tippoo Sultaun; and we had the satisfaction to reflect, that through

an arduous struggle, against an host of foes, India had been preserved to Great-Britain.

At one and the same moment, economical retrenchments were forming in Great-Britain, and carrying into effect in India; and although I am willing to allow the Board of Controul the merit of great attention to the affairs of the East-India Company, yet I utterly deny them that merit which their partisans have assumed for them, I mean the merit of saving to the Company a million and a half sterling in their annual expenditure in India. They have the merit of approving what was done in India by the Company's servants, and in Great-Britain by the Court of Directors, and no more.

It cannot be denied, but that the King's minister, or the commissioners, for they are in fact the same, possessed that influence in the direction which ministers ever have possessed. In fact, the King's minister has almost invariably appointed to the high situations in India. Mr. Hastings was four several times appointed governor-general of Bengal, by the legislature, on the recommendation



tion of Lord North. Mr. Wheler, Mr. Stables, and Sir John Macpherson, were appointed members of the supreme council, on the recommendation, or through the influence of Lord North. The same influence placed Sir Eyre Coote at the head of the army, and sent Sir Thomas Rumbold, and Sir Hector Munro to Madras: and it was once a very strong complaint which you, Mr. Fox, made against your friend Lord Sandwich, that he had acquired such a corrupt influence in the East-India Company, that he was enabled to counteract every effort which you made to remove him from the Admiralty.

I AFFIRM, that ministerial influence at the India-house has been less since Mr. Pitt's bill passed, than at any former period. General Sloper was appointed to Bengal, and Sir John Dalling to Madras, without any recommendation from the minister, and I believe in direct opposition to his wishes. The subsequent appointments of Earl Cornwallis, Sir Archibald Campbell, and General Meadows, were in fact Mr. Pitt's appointments, in the same manner that Mr. Wheler's, Mr. Stables',

Stables', and Sir John Macpherson's, were Lord North's. But is there no difference between allowing the Minister to retain that species of influence at the India-house, which a minister always has had, and throwing the entire patronage, both in India and in Great-Britain, into the hands of seven commissioners?

THE tranquillity that reigns in the Carnatic, the increase of population and of cultivation, the extinction of parties, and the satisfaction so strongly expressed by the old Nabob, are proofs that the decision as to his debts was a wise one. That many bonds were granted by the old man, not for money received, I believe; but unless he will himself discriminate those from the rest, which he is earnestly desired to do, I see not the possibility of discovering by any other means what bonds were *bona fide* granted for money received, and what were gratuitously given by the Nabob, to their original holders.

THE next important act in the administration of India, was that most salutary law, by which the powers of the ~~company~~ in India were



were considerably enlarged. The beneficial effects of this system we now experience. Great power, and great responsibility are now lodged where they ought to remain. The patronage of India, is where only it can be safely placed, in India; and the legislature has guarded, as far as human wisdom can guard, against even an improper exercise of patronage in India.—Offices and salaries are classed—attention to seniority is strictly enjoined—nor have I heard a single instance of partiality in the disposal of offices attributed to Earl Cornwallis since his accession to the government.

I COME now to that subject which has occasioned the late discussions in both Houses of Parliament, and in Leadenhall-street.

AFTER Sir Archibald Campbell was appointed Governor of Madras, he was employed to form the several military establishments in India. These were submitted to the Court of Directors, and are printed by order of the House of Commons. Some Gentlemen in the Direction, whose ideas differed from those of General Campbell, proposed that the

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plans should be submitted to Mr. Hastings, who had lately returned from Bengal.—His remarks are also printed: and his opinions coinciding with those of the Directors, it was determined to add one third to the number of Europeans in Bengal, more than those which Mr. Campbell had proposed. The Board of Controul demurred at first, but afterwards adopted the alterations; and the establishment of Bengal was fixed at about five thousand Europeans, and thirty-six battalions of Sepoys.

GENERAL CAMPBELL'S establishment for Bombay, was far beyond the ability of that unproductive island to support; and for Madras, it was so large as to absorb the whole of its revenues. Fortunately it is still an establishment upon paper only, and upon paper only I hope it will remain.

LAST year, when we fully expected a war, the attention of the King's ministers was naturally turned to India. Is it criminal in them to endeavour to correct an error as soon as they discover it? They did discover, that the European force in India was too low, for the importance and value of that empire to

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Great-Britain, and for the dangers to which it might eventually be exposed.

Now, Mr. Fox, let me put this plain question to you. The Board of Controul in 1785, fix a military establishment for India, in virtue of the powers vested in them by law. The Directors think it too small at Bengal; they tell the Commissioners they think so; the Commissioners *consent* to increase the Europeans one-third.

IN 1787, the Commissioners think, with the addition of that third, that it is still too small a force, and they require a considerable addition. I ask you then, if they had the power to fix a small establishment in 1785, had they not also the power to fix a larger in 1787, if upon better information, or from a more perfect knowledge of the subject, they were enabled to correct their former errors?

IN fact, the true question is, *not* whether they had the power, but whether they exercised *that power* properly; whether they did, or did not sacrifice the interests of the East-India Company, in adding so many more king's



officers to their establishment ; and whether such additions were made from a patriotic attention to the public service, or from a wish to increase their own patronage. It is extraordinary that these questions have never yet been argued. I will therefore assume it as a fact, that from some documents before you, of which I am ignorant, you were convinced that the Company could not have raised eighteen hundred men in the month of October last,—and that the great difficulty of the whole is removed, by the arrangement that has taken place, as to the rank of the Company's officers, who, although they are not relieved to the full extent of their petition, have received very great relief indeed ; and in one point, full and complete relief.—I mean from that intolerable grievance which was imposed upon them by that administration, in which you bore a considerable share, in 1782, when brevet local rank was granted to twenty of his Majesty's field officers.

It was almost impossible in so many successive debates on an Indian question, not to allude to a certain great cause now depending in Westminster-Hall. In me, however, it would



would be highly indecent to venture a word upon this delicate subject; but to a simple matter of fact I may speak, and to that fact I am sure I shall have your assent.

You have been represented as standing forth in the present moment as the avenger of the wrongs of oppressed millions, and as relieving the miseries of those, who can only repay you by their prayers to Heaven. This is jargon, this is nonsense, Mr. Fox, which you have manliness enough to despise—for you know it is not true, in any one sense of the word. What you would have done, had your Bill passed, I cannot presume to say; but what Mr. Pitt has done I know, and I will proceed to state it.—

He has raised the stock of the East India Company from one hundred and eighteen to one hundred and seventy; but I deny, that in so doing, he has no more merit than what is due to him for raising the three per cents. from fifty-five to seventy-six.—For if the preamble of your Bill were true, that disorders of an alarming nature prevailed in India, and were increasing, and that the affairs of India would fall into utter ruin, if  
a fitting

a fitting remedy were not instantly provided ; then to Mr. Pitt is due the credit of providing that fitting remedy. Will you accept this, or will you allow me to say that your preamble was false ?—One or the other I must say.

THE real fact would be most unquestionably, that had your preamble been true, the merits of Mr. Pitt and Mr. Dundas are beyond all praise. It could not be disputed, that they have found that “ fit and becoming “ remedy,” which has prevented our affairs from falling “ into utter ruin ;” and they would have the additional merit of having done all this, without giving the constitution such a wound as it could never have survived. Better India be lost, than that the liberties of Englishmen be overturned.

WE are now advanced to that particular stage of Indian enquiries, which mocks all oratory.—A pathetic speech may be made—a lady may faint—the most exquisite sorrow may be affected, when the imaginary sufferings of millions are described, by those who despise both the laws of God and man ; who can see the distresses of hundreds unmoved ;  
who,



who, in many instances, may occasion those distresses, by contracting debts which they have not the most distant prospect of paying. Yet, Mr. Fox, the public judgment must be governed hereafter by their opinion of facts, which shall be proved beyond the power of contradiction. Let me try your preamble by this test, and I challenge the whole world to contradict any one assertion that I shall make.

On the 18th of November, 1783, your preamble stated, “ that disorders of an  
“ alarming nature and magnitude had long  
“ prevailed, and do still continue and in-  
“ crease; and that the affairs of the Com-  
“ pany would probably fall into utter ruin,  
“ if an immediate and fitting remedy were  
“ not provided.”

THAT no immediate and fitting remedy has been provided to this day, you have constantly asserted. Let me therefore state how we have existed in India without it. At the moment you brought in your Bill, hostilities had ceased in every part of Indostan; and peace upon terms secure, honourable, and  
advantageous,



advantageous, had been concluded with every European and native power in India, except Tippoo Sultaun. With him a negociation had commenced, and the peace was signed in the month of March following.

IN Bengal and its dependencies, we enjoyed, at the time your Bill was brought in, the most perfect tranquility—the natives were then, as they are now, “ the happiest, “ and best protected subjects in India.” Our Treasury was indeed low; but that was the natural consequence of having sent six millions sterling to Madras and Bombay, during the late arduous war. What Mr. Hastings predicted very soon after your Bill was before the House of Commons, has in fact happened. He ventured to assure the Court of Directors, in the month of December, 1783, that a very few years of peace would effectually relieve Bengal from all its incumbrances.—Of the state of Madras I shall say but little. Your opinion of the relative rights of the Nabob of Arcot, and the Rajah of Tanjore, you have naturally imbibed from Mr. Burke. His sentiments respecting them are very well known; and a clause in his

Subsidiary Bill was admirably calculated to prevent that tranquility which now happily reigns upon the coast of Coromandel. Bombay was in 1783, a dead load upon us.—It is so still; and it is beyond the ingenuity of either Mr. Fox or Mr. Pitt, to make it otherwise. I affirm, therefore, with confidence, that though you asserted India to be in a dangerous state, you totally failed in your proof; and though you predicted utter ruin if your Bill did not pass, yet the actual state of India now, and for some years past, most fully refutes your assertion.

In the arduous struggle for power, which followed the rejection of your Bill, India was totally forgotten—But did any bad consequence follow? At length Mr. Pitt became firmly established in his office. He met this Parliament with a new India Bill, and it passed into a law in August, 1784.

DURING the progress of both bills through the House of Commons, we heard several admirable dissertations upon government; and I, for one, fully subscribe to your excellent doctrine, that all governments are, or  
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ought to be, established for the happiness of the governed. But in contradiction to this excellent principle, the British government in India is most unquestionably established for the benefit of Great-Britain. In all the successions of ministers and directors, from our first acquisition of Bengal to the present moment, however humane we may be in theory, I have observed, that every minister has shewn a laudable zeal to turn to the best advantage for the public, the vast revenues which we enjoy in Indostan.

WHAT your seven directors would have done, I will not pretend to say; but what the present Board of Controul have done, I know; and I think you will agree with me, that the following state of their transactions is strictly consonant to truth.

WE were told by Mr. Burke, that in the year 1772, the government of Bengal exposed all the nobility and country gentlemen of a great kingdom to sale. This was described as one of the most wicked and wanton acts of tyranny and arbitrary power ever practised in any country; and so undoubtedly



edly it would have been, were the fact really so.

You are now, Sir, sufficiently versed in oriental learning, to know, that in Indostan the lands are the property of the sovereign. You must know also, that a zemindar is an officer of government appointed to collect the rents on the part of government. You must have heard also, that the directors at home, and many of our best-informed countrymen in India, actually believed in the year 1772, that Mahomed Reza Cawn had defrauded the Company of many millions sterling, and that the only possible mode by which the Company could attain a knowledge of the actual value of the lands, was by letting them to the highest bidder. It was in vain however to represent a word upon this subject while you were in the plenitude of your power. Mr. Burke, who was never in India, and Mr. Francis, who, though six years there, never could speak a syllable to a Zemindar in his own language, (and a Zemindar knows no other) these gentlemen, I say, had formed an ingenious system, from which it would have been treachery to depart.

WITH these strong ideas of the rights of Zemindars, the present Board of Controul succeeded to the superintendence and direction of the revenues of Bengal. But mark, I pray you, the difference between theory and practice;—they have ordered that system to be adopted, the wisdom of which was never disputed, and which in fact has been precisely the system pursued since the English have managed the revenues of Bengal; that is, that in all practicable instances the lands shall be let to Zemindars. In Bengal there are four very large zemindaries, Burdwan, Dinagapore, Rajeshay, and Nuddea. In the two first, the zemindars are minors, the third belongs to a woman, and the fourth only can be managed by the zemindar himself.

IN these, as in all the zemindaries, the amount of the settlement, or rent, is fixed by government; the zemindar has the first option, but if he refuses to take it, either the collection is made Rhass, that is, government by its own officers collects the rents, or it is let to a farmer. At the present moment, almost the whole province of Bahar is let to farmers, by a settlement formed by

Mr.



Mr. Shore; and above one half of the province of Bengal is let to farmers. The late consultations are filled with instances of the dispossession of zemindars, and the sale of their property, to make good their arrears of rent to government; and almost the last revenue act which we have received from Bengal, sanctioned by Lord Cornwallis, was the sale of a part of the zemindary of the Ranpee of Rajeshay, because she had fallen in arrears in her rents.

WHEN therefore Mr. Dundas asserted, that the Board of Controul had given security to the landholders in Bengal, I was much pleased to hear you call out for the proofs of that assertion. The landholders have, in fact, the same security for that species of property which they hold in the land, that they have had at any one time. One very beneficial regulation they have indeed ordered to be enforced, but that regulation has been repeatedly recommended from Bengal; it is this, that the lands should be let at fixed rents, upon very long leases. They have the merit also of resisting the ingenious reasonings of a speculative man, Mr. James Grant,



Grant, who has confidently asserted, that the zemindars of Bengal have defrauded government of a very large sum annually; and they have the merit also (if my information on this point be true) of declaring that they will give the zemindars of Bengal certain rights in the soil, which the government of Bengal have lately declared they do not possess.

FROM this short account it will appear clearly evident, that the Board of Controul have made no alteration in the revenue system, except that which was recommended some years ago from Bengal.

IF you examine our foreign system, you will find it precisely the same that it has been for some years past. No proposition has been made for the restoration of Cheyt Sing. On the contrary, the government of Bengal has, by the last dispatch, assured the Directors, that the province of Benares is in a most flourishing state, and that the revenues will be fully realized. The Directors and the Board of Controul in reply, have expressed their great satisfaction at this intelligence,

gence, and desire every attention may be used, to preserve the interest which the Company has in that valuable zemindary.

LET us pass on to Oude, and the extensive dominions of the Nabob Vizier; you will find that the system established the 31st of December, 1783, has been rigidly adhered to. We have received all arrears from the Nabob; we protect his dominions from foreign invasion, and he pays us for the forces employed for this purpose, and all incidental expences, fifty lacks of ficca rupees.

HYDER BEG KHAN, of whom we have heard so much, is still his minister, and was received by Earl Cornwallis with every possible mark of attention and regard.

AFTER this short detail, allow me to affirm, Mr. Fox, that Bengal was at no time in danger of falling into utter ruin; that the temporary distresses to which it was subject were occasioned by the politics of Great-Britain; and that by its own vigour and exertions it had actually relieved itself from those

those distresses, at the very moment when you persuaded the people of England, that India was ruined, and when you sunk the stock in one day from one hundred and thirty-five to one hundred and eighteen.

A FEW words before I conclude upon the difference between the two celebrated Bills.—We have the experience of four years that India can be preserved, and that it can flourish under the system established by Mr. Pitt's Bill.—We have the experience of two years, that the extraordinary powers granted to Earl Cornwallis and Sir Archibald Campbell, are in the highest degree beneficial. Yet Mr. Burke told us, when they were granted, that they went to establish despotism and arbitrary power. I have since been asked by fifty people, "Don't you think what Burke said about arbitrary power in Westminster-Hall, was vastly fine?" Yet, though I abhor the idea of arbitrary power in Great-Britain, I know that our governments in India ever have possessed, and ever must possess it: and I am better pleased that it should rest as it does now,



now, in a governor, than in the majority of a council.

THE system then, as perfected by Mr. Pitt, for the government of India, is this, that our governors, taking the responsibility upon themselves, should have the power of acting according to the dictates of their own judgment in all cases of difficulty.

THAT in the disposal of offices in India, seniority should be attended to as strictly as possible; but that at all events the patronage of India, should be disposed of in India.

THAT the patronage to be given away in England, should all be at the disposal of the Court of Directors. By them all contracts for exports are made—all offices at the India-House are filled—all ships are appointed to voyages—and when Sir Henry Fletcher's supernumeraries no longer exist, by the Directors will all cadets and writers be appointed. Possibly a member of the Board of Controul may be able to get a good Bengal voyage. I know we have a Henry Dundas, and a Melville Castle, a Pitt, and  
E a Wil-

a William Pitt, a Lord Mulgrave, and a Lord Walsingham, amongst our ships; but it can only be by procuring the nomination of one of the Directors—an influence which Lord North, and every other minister enjoyed in the same manner.

By your bill there was no check of any kind established. Your commissioners had the entire removal of every person in office, either at home or abroad. They had the power of making as many new appointments, or creating as many new offices, as they should think proper. They were subject to no controul. The proprietors had the permission to assemble once in three months, to hear their accounts read to them. The natural consequence of this great change would have been, that the patronage of India, and of Great-Britain as connected with India, was gone from Leadenhall-street for ever. I have not only my dividend to receive upon the present system, but I may look forward to the appointment of a son or a nephew to India hereafter, through my connections in Leadenhall-street. Many other proprietors have the same prospects. But could we have  
gone

gone to Brooks's, to Drury-lane, or to Beaconsfield? Yet we must have gone there to solicit for appointments, had your Bill passed into a law.

EVERY man who has the welfare of his country at heart, must sincerely rejoice that the late ample discussions have taken place in Parliament. The country Gentlemen were alarmed, perhaps more than the occasion warranted; yet if there was an error, it was on the safe side. It proves to me, that the Company's Charter must be renewed; nor can the imagination of man conceive any possible mode by which India can be retained under the dominion of Great-Britain, unless through the medium of a company, without danger to our liberties.

COLONEL BARRE described very justly, and with great accuracy, the various channels into which the patronage at present ran. The minister has called upon us to watch him and his colleagues; and there never will be wanting in this or in any future House of Commons, men who will have sagacity to



to detect every attempt that shall be made by the Board of Controul, to encroach upon that patronage, which the law has placed in the hands of the East-India Company.

I am, SIR,

Your most obedient

humble Servant,

March 25, 1788.

A PROPRIETOR of India Stock.



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A SHORT ACCOUNT OF THE  
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